

THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*.

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke*.

No. 4.

JULY, 1941.

VOL. XXXI.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

THE CHAIR OF THEOLOGY IN BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY.

The creation of a Professorship of Theology in the University of Birmingham is in harmony with the trend of Higher Education in the English-speaking world. It is the response to a double demand. First, that our modern British Universities shall include within the orbit of their studies all the main departments of knowledge, both scientific and cultural. When London, the first of the newer universities, came into existence no Faculty of Theology was included in its sphere; but what the University, beset by various practical difficulties, did not do then, it was led to do later. It was found that the subject was too important to be excluded. All the newer universities within the British Empire have not followed London's example, but the University of Birmingham, in population the second city in the Empire, has, we are glad to observe, followed London's example. Secondly, that if we are to have theology taught in a modern community, it must be taught in the best way: its objective must be truth, and its method scientific. In a modern Faculty of Theology, we must have the scientific study of religion, historical and comparative: we must have Biblical criticism, textual, literary and historical. Christian institutions must be rigorously investigated

in relation to their origins and development : Church history must be genetic, not merely descriptive and didactic : Christian dogmas must be presented not only in relation to their documentary and conciliar origin, but also in relation to the psychology of religion : last, but not least, the Philosophy of Religion must have its place, for, as Professor F. C. Burkitt remarked,

‘ Young men to-day select for study, not dogmatic theology, but the philosophy of religion ; for they are more interested in discovering, not what has been believed, but what can be believed.’

In short, if a Faculty of Theology in a British university is not going to teach theology in this way, it can, from the university standpoint, serve no useful purpose. If, however, it teaches theology in this way, it does serve a most useful purpose ; first, because it makes theology intellectually respectable by introducing into the study of religion—a sphere in which ancient taboos, venerable superstitions and primitive traditions strive to maintain their sway—the light of advancing truth and the authority of scientific criticism. Secondly, the universities, by teaching Christian theology in this way, establish a standard which the various Christian denominations (especially in the training of their ministers, and, in a lesser degree, in the public teaching of their members) must also adopt, if they are not to lose their hold on the intelligence of the nation.

Every open-minded secularist who believes in scientific truth, as well as every intelligent Christian who believes in the truth of the Christian religion, should welcome and support the teaching of theology in our universities. The study of the evolution of human culture and civilization indicates that religion is an important factor, probably the most important factor, in their development. In the light of this accepted conclusion one lesson stands out pre-eminently, namely, that it is necessary in the interests of a community to secure the very best kind of religion for it. It is not a choice for any community as to whether it will have a religion or whether it will not have a religion. Its choice is limited to whether it will have the highest religion within its power or some lower species of religion. In short, if a community does not possess a religion in which the highest forms of goodness, truth, and beauty have their place, it will not have no religion at all ; it will have a religion of a lower kind—a debasing superstition which will in the end prove detrimental in an

infinite number of ways to the welfare of the community. We who are Christians believe that the Christian religion, truly understood and truly presented, is not only the highest product of the religious spirit in man, but that it is capable of infinite development. Therefore we welcome especially the establishment of this Professorship of Theology, not simply in the interests of scientific and literary culture, but in the interests of the Christian religion itself, and the extension of its influence over mankind.

PROFESSOR H. G. WOOD'S INAUGURAL LECTURE.

No more appropriate appointment could have been made to the new Chair of Theology than that of the well-known Quaker scholar, Dr. H. G. Wood. Birmingham owes much to him as a religious leader whose enlightened Christian scholarship is combined with an attractive Christian personality.

In his inaugural lecture¹ Professor Wood dealt with the religious problem in university education as it presented itself to the founders of the earliest of the modern universities. The two main objections then to the university teaching of theology were 'the divisions among the churches' and the need for securing 'an open field for the development of the natural sciences' (p. 6). How things have changed since those days! Natural science has not only secured *lebensraum* but has become the cuckoo subject in the curriculum of the modern university. The problem of disunion still exists detrimentally for the various competing Christian denominations in this country, but it is a vanishing feature in the world of Christian scholarship. Christian students of every denomination in this country are able to come together, not only to listen to lectures by professors of different Christian denominations from their own, but even to discuss among themselves, harmoniously and profitably, the most controversial of religious themes. All are slowly but surely finding their unity in the free search for truth. All are first and foremost truth-seekers, although some believe they already possess a large measure of the truth, while others, in the spirit of Sir Isaac Newton, know themselves to be but seekers on the shore of a vast, untraversed ocean. Thus the two main objections which

¹ Published for private circulation. Copies may be obtained from Dr. Wood, The University, Edmund Street, Birmingham 3.

existed to the formation of a Faculty of Theology in a modern university have been swept away.

Dr. Wood is, however, acutely conscious of a unifying movement in the world of Christian modern thought which, while it is drawing together those of various Christian denominations who have hitherto been disunited, yet promises to do it in so exclusive a fashion as to narrow the comprehensiveness of the Christian Church of the future. He cites in this connection the words of Mr. David Paton in his book *Blind Guides* :

'In the world of theology there is a very close drawing together of the thought of the various Christian traditions, much closer than could have seemed possible not very many years ago. The same is true of the world of ecclesiastical relations. The position is such that at the moment it is possible for many Christians of student age to pass from reading a Roman Catholic such as Karl Adam or Jacques Maritain to an Eastern Orthodox like Berdyaev; to go on to English Congregationalists like C. H. Dodd or N. Micklem, and from there to an American Lutheran like Reinhold Niebuhr or an Anglo-Catholic like T. S. Eliot, and finish up with a German Confessional like Karl Barth; and to retain throughout the conviction that underlying all the differences is an inner unity which marks them all off decisively from those of the "liberal" tradition.'

Professor Wood, while he views the positive side of this unifying movement with approbation, is not without apprehension as he contemplates its narrowing and hardening tendency :

'I am inclined to think that the "liberal" tradition to which the new orthodoxy is opposed is often misrepresented and underestimated by the exponents of this newer more positive theology.' . . .

. . . 'This is an under-statement. Both in politics and in theology the present violent reaction against the liberal tradition is disastrous. Whatever may be the failures and limitations of liberal parties and liberal schools, liberal politicians and liberal theologians, they have stood for principles that remain true and have rendered services which should never be forgotten.'

On the other hand, Dr. Wood recognizes, as all must who are acquainted with our modern academic *intelligentsia*, that there is a liberalism which seems incapable of making any positive contribution to any movement, be it religion, politics, economics, ethics, with which it is associated :

'The liberalism which was little more than a broad tolerance of irresponsible speculation and which cultivated the open mind on issues that required personal commitment is certainly out of favour now. We are now more in sympathy with the saying attributed to R. H. Tawney: "The only advantage of having an open mind is that you can shut it." There is a dilettante liberalism that cuts the nerve of positive conviction, and to-day positive conviction is our crying need.'

On the function of a University in reference to controversial

spheres of study, Dr. Wood aptly writes :

‘The influence of the university should be exerted continually to allay the heats, to undermine the prejudices and expose the cant of party-politics.’

In discussing the true nature of theology and the relation of religion to revelation, Dr. Wood writes :

‘A Chair of Theology as distinct from a Chair of the Science of Religion involves the assumption that the knowledge of God is possible to us men and that some knowledge of God is actual. I take it for self-evident that if there be any genuine knowledge of God, it can only be through a divine self-disclosure, and religion without revelation can only mean that theology is not a true science. A theology is only possible if we believe that God is and that He is the rewarder of them that sincerely seek Him.’

With this we think all must agree, but we have some difficulty in understanding the implications of Dr. Wood’s following statement :

‘Personally, I no longer believe, as I was once inclined to believe, that theology can be based on an induction from religious experience in general. At best, such an induction would yield us the highest common factor of religious experience, and, in fact, it would leave us with the desiccated *caput mortuum* of all religions. A theology starts from the acceptance of some particular occasion as revelatory’ (p. 12).

Does Dr. Wood mean that the affirmations of Christian theology differ from the conclusions of the philosophy of religion? This is true in actual practice, because there are several philosophies of religion abroad and they are not all in agreement with each other. In ideal this ought not to be the case. Tertullian, in his treatise *De Testimonio Animae*, affirms that the testimony of the human soul in the matter of religion is naturally Christian (*anima humana naturaliter Christiana*).

Dr. Hastings Rashdall declared his aim was to keep the right wing of the philosophers and the left wing of the theologians together. We think he was striving to perform a right and useful task, but a very difficult one, and we hope that Dr. Wood does not think that as a Professor of Theology that task should, notwithstanding the popularity of Barthian ideologies, be ignored. Of course it is quite legitimate in producing a philosophy of religion to begin with the study of religious origins and to work forward and upward, concluding with the highest form of religious experience, remembering always, as good evolutionists, the soundness of Aristotle’s axiom, ‘That the true nature of a thing is that which it is when its becoming is completed.’ Or,

on the other hand, our philosophy of religion may legitimately begin with an examination and analysis of the highest form of our religious experience. But in so far as both these methods are soundly used, the ultimate conclusions arrived at must be the same, and these conclusions must be in harmony with the conclusions of a true Christian theology, for truth is one. When in the later Middle Ages the view received support that a proposition might be philosophically true yet theologically false, and *vice versa*, the scholastic and ecclesiastical world was hastening to the edge of a precipice. There is a growing conviction to-day that humanity is in dire need of the Christian religion, but although the leaders of the Christian Churches are equally convinced that humanity is also in need of the Christian theology, there are vast multitudes of Christian folk, both simple and learned, who have no such conviction—the simple folk, because they live their Christian religion, mystical and moral, without possessing a Christian dogmatic system: the scholarly folk, because they are convinced that large parts at least of the Christian dogmatic formularies are untrue, not in their essence, but in many of their affirmations. Plainly, what is needed is a theological re-statement and re-formulation, and here it seems to us a Chair of Theology in a modern university can be of the greatest use. ‘Religion,’ said Dean Inge, ‘begins with an experiment and ends in an experience.’ Many of us will be satisfied to leave it there, making our religion a matter of life, not of logic. But our ecclesiastical authorities, not satisfied to leave it there, insist on our professing Christian faith in terms of archaic formularies. We look to our university faculties of theology to solve the dilemma by providing lucid modern formularies in which a living Christian faith can find convincing and inspired verbal expression. Otherwise there are rocks ahead in the universities themselves of which Professor Wood takes no cognizance in his inaugural lecture. We refer to the strong body of opinion in our universities, at home and across the Atlantic, that there is no need for the establishment of Faculties of Theology, since all that is of worth in what they teach can be taught in the departments of Philosophy, Anthropology and History. To make anything but scientific truth the proper object of a University Faculty of Theology must strengthen this opposition to the establishment of Chairs of Theology.

THE UNCOMPROMISING ELEMENTS IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Had we asked the writer of the *Apocalypse* whether the Christian religion can compromise, he would have answered with an unflinching 'No.' Had we asked St. Paul, he would have replied to us : 'For though there be that are called gods whether in heaven or in earth, . . . yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him ; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him' (*I Cor.* viii, 5, 6); 'I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some' (*I Cor.* ix, 22). Had we put the question to our Saviour, we might have elicited the replies : 'He that is not with me is against me'; and 'he that is not against us is for us.'

The writer of this note was once condemning opportunism, when his interlocutor retorted, 'You ought to favour it; you are a clergyman.' I replied, 'You seem to be confusing opportunism with compromise. In the Christian religion I find no place for opportunism, but I do find a place for compromise.' Compromise is a typically English quality. All English policy, whether in politics or religion, is marked by it. It has certainly been the mark of English Liberalism. To-day in influential circles there is a great reaction against Liberalism, both in politics and religion. That is not because Liberalism is bad but because it has gone too far. It has allowed compromise to drift into opportunism. To Liberalism in religion we owe a great debt. It won its way, as its history shews, not in running away from its convictions, but in self-sacrificingly striving for them. It based its policy on the supreme obligation of loyalty to freedom, however it might be misused; loyalty to truth, however unpleasant and unpopular; loyalty to the claims of a common humanity, however disconcerting and repulsive.

'God's image cut in ebony,' says some one;
If 'tis God's image, then a very rum one.

But in loyalty to these ideals Liberalism seems, in many cases, to have lost its sense of proportion and to have ignored a right scale of values. Phrases usurped the place of realities; sentimentalism the place of common-sense; opportunism the place of compromise based on principle. As a consequence, issues became hopelessly confused and fundamental distinctions ob-

literated. Black did not become white, nor white black, but all a grey mist in which the escapist could find refuge, the coward concealment, and the sentimentalist emotional satisfaction.

Wishful thinking and sentimental idealizing needed to be recalled from its primrose path to tread the narrow way of hard fact and stern reality; where truth of experience is found to be more real than competing ideologies; where liberty is in perpetual conflict with licence; and where our common humanity is seen to be a very mixed affair of good and evil, the human and the brute.

The Christian religion, especially in the foreign mission field, has been deeply affected both by the rise of Liberalism and its decline. In no spirit of liberal compromise the Christian missionary of a hundred years ago surveyed the scene of his appointed labours, 'where every prospect pleases but only man is vile,' and 'the heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone.' But his successor in the mission field, as he pursued his difficult undertaking, discovered that in many cases the heathen was by no means so vile as had been supposed and that, although he made use of images in his worship, he was often found to be worshipping not them, but a spiritual and moral reality which his images mis-represented. This being so, the liberally minded man was prepared to question the value of Christian missions, not in Melanesia, where they obviously prevented shipwrecked mariners from being consumed by cannibals, but in the East, where ancient and imposing religions were important factors in preserving venerable and aesthetic civilizations. Could not the Christian religion, on the ground that it was but one religion among many—a truth-seeker like all the rest, but by no means the only truthfinder—be persuaded to abandon its propagandist efforts and confine its activities to the civilizations of the West, which it had played no unimportant part in developing?

To-day there is a growing conviction in Christian circles that this liberal plea must be definitely rejected. To yield to it would be to cut the tap-root of the Christian religion, for that religion claims not only to be the highest religion but also the universal religion by the acceptance of which alone mankind can secure full salvation. This conviction is not based on Christian arrogance, but on the deepest concern for human welfare and

progress. To-day we are compelled to think of mankind as a unity, and the need for a universal religion which shall unite mankind on the highest level is an urgent necessity : hence this claim of the Christian religion to be the universal religion of mankind is more than ever significant. Even the most liberal of Christians must be loyal to it. However much he values the truth in other religions and recognizes their value for their adherents, he cannot regard these religions as possessing either the universality or the finality of the Christian religion. Their study certainly enables the Christian to understand better the general character of religion ; but, what is of more importance, it enables him to realize the peculiar strength and quality of the Christian religion. The liberal Christian reverences

‘ The prophets of the elder day,
The slant-eyed sages of Cathay.’

He regards the founders of these great religions as the Christs of Persia, of India, of China, of Arabia, but Jesus is for him the Christ of mankind, the Light of the World. And he is convinced that ultimately mankind, without ceasing to reverence its national prophets, must offer its supreme loyalty to Jesus Christ. For the sake of the human race as a whole, the Christian cannot allow the good to become the enemy of the best. This is the conviction of Dr. R. B. Manikam, a native Indian Christian, as set forth in his article ‘The Uncompromising Elements in Christianity’ published in *The International Review of Missions* for July.

Important compromises — social, ecclesiastical, liturgical — ought to be made by the Christian Church in its efforts to embrace the adherents of these other religions : there is much in their ancestral religion which they ought to retain in the interests of their own religious life, although such things may seem strange to traditional Christians — the Christian Church has often been much too stiff and illiberal here — but there are some issues on which no compromise is possible. Dr. Manikam fixes on the following : the personality and spiritual authority of Jesus Christ are unique : God is transcendent, immanent and incarnate : man is a personality possessed of freewill : every man is a child of God and immortal : human sin is a reality which neither intellectual enlightenment nor mystical absorption can

abolish : man can only be freed from sin through transformation of the human spirit by divine love acting upon it : the Cross of Christ alone gives full value to evil and suffering : the fellowship of the Christian Church is a necessity for the Divine Kingdom on earth : the Holy Spirit is an ever-present Power.

This compressed account of the uncompromising elements in the Christian religion will be of value, especially in the Indian mission field ; but as an expression of fundamental Christian Faith and Duty we need something more primal and less controversial.

ALL ABOARD FOR ARARAT.

In Southrop Church in Gloucestershire, roughly carved on an ancient Norman font, are two female figures : the one strong and dignified, wearing a mural crown and holding a lance bearing the cross on its pennon ; the other figure blindfolded, drooping, and clinging to a shattered lance. The former figure represents the Christian Church ; the latter Judaism. A similar symbolical representation survives in Strassburg Cathedral and also as a frescoe on the ceiling of the Chapter House of York Minster. They witness to the state of Judaism in Christendom at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Generations passed : the Protestant Reformation arrived. When its religious fanaticism had subsided there came the period of Liberal enlightenment in the West, and under it the tolerated Jews became prosperous and influential. This period was followed by the anti-Semitism of the twentieth century, and, save in the British Empire and in the United States, the Jew has been reduced to the condition in which he was in the thirteenth century.

This is true of Judaism viewed externally, but not of Judaism as seen from within. Hans Komala, in a significant article in *The International Review of Missions* for July, 1941, expresses his conviction that to-day Judaism is neither dead nor dying, notwithstanding its empty synagogues and persecuted adherents, but is experiencing a process of re-birth, and as a consequence of this re-birth it is developing a missionary spirit which is leading it to seek to unite its religious forces with those

of the Christian Church. The form of this Jewish missionary aspiration, if Mr. Hans Komala is to be trusted, is as surprising as it is curious :

‘ The sons of Noah were given seven commandments : in respect of idolatry, incest (unchastity), shedding of blood, profanation of the name of God, justice, robbery, cutting off of flesh or limb from a living animal. (GenR Noah xxxiv, 8.)

Whosoever receives the seven commandments, and is careful to observe them, he is one of the pious of the nations of the world, and has a share in the world to come. (Maimonides, HMeI viii, 10.)

Thus Moses, our master, has commanded us, by Divine tradition, to compel all that come into the world to take upon themselves the commandments imposed upon the sons of Noah, and whosoever will not receive them is to be put to death. (Maimonides, l.c.) ’

... ‘ It is on the basis of Noachism that Judaism seeks to accomplish an “ understanding ” between the Synagogue and the Church.’

Had Mr. Hans Komala told his readers that the regeneration of Judaism was to be effected on the lines of Liberal Judaism as expounded by Dr. Claude Montefiore and its other able leaders in Great Britain and America, and that through this movement in conjunction with Liberal Christianity the religious forces of Judaism and Christianity would be finally united, we should not only have welcomed his prognostications but have regarded them as credible. As Liberal Christians we are convinced that it is only along these lines that the middle wall of partition between Judaism and Christianity can be broken down. But when Mr. Hans Komala propounds the view that this union is to be secured by means of Noachism we regard his forecast as due to a vision of the night inspired by reading, before retiring to bed, Mr. H. G. Wells’ latest *jeu d’esprit*, *All Aboard for Ararat*.

Closer contact with Jews and Judaism produced by the upheavals and topsy-turvydom of the present war has certainly brought home to many British Christians the conviction, of which they were only dimly aware, that there is a Jewish problem and that something needs doing. It is not Noachism that can do it, but the Christian spirit more truly and practically realized in life and conduct by both Christian and Jew. If this conversion (and it is fundamentally a moral and spiritual conversion) cannot be secured in the near future we shall have anti-Semitism breaking out in new forms and in unexpected localities.

PARLIAMENT AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE, O.B.E., M.D., M.P.

PARLIAMENT, reflecting the main streams of thought in all sections, is deeply concerned with the religious state of the people, as brought to light by the war. Public attention is now restricted to the war; but it is clear that the national morale — so essential, so manifest, so justly praised in the Battle of Britain — is the product of the religion of successive generations. Religion was the battle-cry of the Crusades, of the Elizabethan sailors, of Cromwell's Ironsides, the sustaining force of soldiers and sailors, great and small, as in its perverted form it inspires Hitler's Youth; but, alas, it has no conscious religious basis in a large and increasing majority of our people to-day. We are fighting on our religious, as on our material, assets; and, unless they can be revived and underpinned, they are wasting assets; and with their wasting morale will wither away.

Parliament knows quite well the main reasons for this decline. In the post-Napoleonic era there has been the battle against authority; the battle for liberty; the spread of a limited education, with its opportunity for ill-formed criticism, especially through the press; the battle of the denominations; their refusal to discard the tattered remains of past theological disputes; their inability to accept as equally divine the revelations of history and science; and their failure to interpret the Gospel according to the circumstance and thought of to-day.

This decline in religion may by some be described as a smothering of the still smouldering fire under the ashes of dead controversy and the wet blanket of static ceremonial and interpretation; or by the cares and counter-attractions and activities of the world; open it up and the bonfire will break out again. By all means let the Churches continue their good work with all the help we and the public can give them. But 80 per cent. of the people do not attend church services. On the long view it is the next and future generations that must be our main care; and they can no longer in general rely on church services, nor on

their parents, as we and our forebears relied on ours, for the religious instruction, habit and reverence essential to the Christian life.

Until, then, a new generation of parents arises, who will inculcate the basic truths and habits of Christianity by teaching, discipline and example, we must turn to the schools. And there we are shocked by the present position, in which to save difficulties the national system of education has treated religion as the Cinderella of all subjects. Certainly in many Council and Church schools the teachers are deeply concerned about it and do their best — often with success — to overcome the difficulties. In many Church schools the headmaster, managers and rector make religion a real influence throughout the curriculum. But the teaching profession and authorities are adamant against any religious test for teachers. Many teachers have little or no interest in religion; many are agnostic; some even anti-Christian. They cannot, with the best of wills, give any really religious instruction.

On February 12th the Archbishops issued a manifesto, calling on all Christian people to unite in promoting certain reforms so that the education provided for the youth of our country should be an effective training for Christian life and citizenship. Soon after Easter a few members of either House of Parliament, on the initiative of Lord Wolmer, met to consider what practical steps could be taken, now during the war while the iron is hot, to deal with the problem which has been recognized so long with so little effect. A preliminary meeting of a dozen Peers and Commoners recently found an unexpected agreement on principle in the outside bodies, now considering the subject — agreement between the Church of England and Free Churches, agreement in general amongst those who speak for the teachers, and the blessing of the Ministry of Education on these labours. It was decided therefore to call a further meeting of all members of either House, likely to be interested, to hear representative addresses on the present position and prospects of the problem.

Unfortunately, owing to the bombing of the Houses of Parliament, this meeting had to be transferred to a less convenient place. But over thirty members attended to hear brief, concise, informative statements by Canon Spencer Leeson (Headmaster

of Winchester), Canon Woodard (officially occupied on behalf of the Church of England on the subject), Dr. Harrison (Chairman of the Education Committee of the Methodist Union), Dr. Albert Peel (ex-President of the Congregational Union) and Mr. Slinn, a headmaster of rural elementary schools. Both Houses, all parties, soldiers, educationalists, Ireland and the Roman Church contributed to the discussion. All were agreed as to the urgent need and as to the proposals, limited though they may be, now contemplated.

These proposals are as follows :

(1) That Religious Instruction should, equally with other subjects, be inspected by His Majesty's Inspectors or persons specially appointed for the purpose, subject to the assent of the Local Education Authority or of Managers or Governors of a school. This would ensure that the subject is treated at least as seriously as the rest of the curriculum. It would bring difficulties to light and help teachers and authorities to meet, to overcome and eventually to prevent such difficulties.

(2) That Religious Knowledge be included amongst the optional subjects for the Joint Board Teachers' Certificates. Whereas at present the subject is crowded out of the curriculum for entrance to the teaching profession, students would thus be encouraged to study it, both for its own interest and in order to qualify to give the teaching and to secure appointment accordingly.

(3) Whereas full liberty of conscience must be secured to parents and teachers, and whereas most Local Education Authorities have already adopted a Syllabus for use in Elementary Schools, they should ensure that in all schools there are sufficient teachers willing and qualified to give religious instruction according to an agreed Syllabus.

(4) The daily time-table in every school should include a service of united worship, usually at the opening, with power to vary it, as on festival or saints' days, either in school or in church.

The two agreed Syllabuses brought to my notice are those for Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, the latter published by the Cambridge University Press for 2/6. These short books have fascinated me, as a layman with a critical, scientific mind,

in their wise limitation of Christian teaching to the mental capacities of each age from toddlers' classes to senior schools in their several sections, with proper emphasis on essentials and on the more attractive features of the Bible-story, leaving the more particular dogmas, customs and liturgies to be inculcated by the Churches at ages after leaving the elementary and senior schools at fifteen. These agreed Syllabuses too are of special interest in their introductory sections, briefly but clearly and candidly dealing with the main difficulties that occur to us all in approaching the subject.

In your May issue, Mr. R. B. Henderson, in his article on Canon Braley's 'Policy in Religious Education,' considered the adoption of the agreed syllabus to be the crux of the problem. This did not seem so to us. A diocesan syllabus may undoubtedly appear an obstacle with the prominence it gives to the Church catechism or to the Creeds; most schoolmasters will teach the Bible but will not teach the Creeds to children, whether they believe in them or not. To teach the Creeds before the Bible is surely wrong practice; teach the Bible and surely it provides the proper background for the Creeds. It is on this point that we felt hopeful of agreement for teaching in the elementary and senior schools. It is in these that the reform may best be initiated.

This, however, is not yet the end of the dual system. The attitude of our distinguished Roman Catholic colleague was of special interest. Our Church will never give up its schools, he said; we believe in sacramental teaching from the first; but the more you can do to revive religion in the curriculum of the Council schools the better; and God bless you every time.

It would be a mistake to expect Roman Catholics or Jews or Bishops of the Church of England, who have been appealing for funds for new Church schools, to give up their schools, even on Canon Braley's terms. That may indeed be a long-term policy; but the conditions of the bargain must first be assured by many years' experience. We are out for immediate action on a short-term policy. At the same time the Christian atmosphere and discipline of the Roman Catholic schools will be in healthy rivalry with the religious freedom for teachers and children in the Council schools and may well induce these schools quickly to give religion its proper place as the matrix of the whole

school-life rather than as an item of mere information.

The call for a live national Christian education will in due course require a great change in the traditional concept of Christianity. Emphasis is required on the essentially Christian doctrine of love, with all its implications, as greater, sweeter, more efficient than physical force. Too little notice has yet been taken of the new revelation of continuity of the universe and of all life and all things that are therein, supporting our Lord's repugnance to signs and wonders as evidence. But read these agreed Syllabuses; read Yeaxlee's Handbook;¹ read the Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Christian Doctrine; and see that this re-interpretation of the eternal gospel of Christ is coming, not by revolution but by sound, quiet British way of slow, deliberate conviction, evolution and adaptation to present conditions and thought.

The proposals here suggested are the next step. In some points they are less detailed than those of the Archbishops: so we hope to focus attention on the main needs. They are being issued in a statement to all members of both Houses of Parliament. On that, they will be discussed and action taken to secure the necessary procedure by administration and, if needed, by legislation. We feel confident of securing a large measure of support from all sections in Parliament and little or no objection that cannot be cleared away. We believe that, even in the stress of the present time, the Government would welcome and assist any such agreed proposals.

This is but a very modest and unofficial opening behind the scenes in Parliament of an effort to bring about the first steps towards a proper, general and heartfelt instruction of children in the elements of Christian knowledge. It is only a beginning towards our restoration as a Christian nation. But it would be a very good beginning. Now is the time for all who believe in the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth to use their influence with energy to secure the keen co-operation to this end of all persons, teachers and those in authority with a view to the underpinning of the national morale on the only secure basis on which it has grown and must in the future depend.

¹ Handbook to the Cambridge Syllabus of Religious Teaching; written for the Institute of Christian Education at the request of the Cambridge-shire Local Education Authority. Student Christian Movement Press. 4/6.

PASTORS AND PILGRIMS*

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—PHILIPPIANS iii, 13-14.

TO be ordained is sometimes described in popular speech as going into the Church. This wrong turn of phrase suggests how deeply lost for some of our people is the very idea of a Church. Forgetful of their own baptisms, they identify the Church with the clergy. Perhaps it is not altogether their fault. The clergy do appear in the common life as a group apart and appear often to speak for the Church without much reference to lay opinion. Further, the distinction between clergy and laity has been sharpened by reason of the clergy becoming (for all practical purposes) confined to a full-time and paid priesthood. It was not always thus. We learn at school that in the Middle Ages 'benefit of clergy' was extended to many who were not bishops, priests, or deacons, and even if they were, they might be spending most of their energies in secular pursuits. On this point we might be wise to learn from our fathers. Perhaps the office of reader should be exalted; perhaps there is a real place for the permanent diaconate; perhaps we should once again readily ordain to the priesthood those following the teaching and other professions. These are high questions of policy, and in such matters a paralysing conservatism has our Church in its grip, and we know not when the Lord will grant us once again a creative and adventurous temper. Meanwhile you who are to be ordained to-day to a full-time ministry happen to be men who have spent many years in other callings and have also served as readers of our Church. You should have your own particular contribution to bring to the fellowship of the clergy, and the work of the ministry.

* A sermon preached at an ordination of older men in the Chapel of Lis Escop, Truro, on June 15th, 1941, by Chancellor H. G. Mulliner, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Truro Cathedral.

You will find that the clergy form a real fellowship, though not an ideal one. Some have called us the oldest trades union in the world, and this modest title reminds us of our weaknesses as well as of our virtues. I have never met anything but practical kindness from my brethren of the clergy, but in spiritual matters, alas, some are capable of a lack of sympathy which is only paralleled in the extreme wings of politics. To-day by God's mercy this is less true than it was of the Church of England as a whole, and being more generous in our sympathy we are learning more of God from each other. You will find as you come to know the clergy that many of those most worthy of respect and imitation are not prominent in the public eye, they do not attend many committees or conferences or write to the Church papers, but week by week in their parishes they do faithful pastoral work, neither exalted by success nor depressed by failure, looking for no earthly reward of wealth or praise or repute, ministering to their people, each according to his lights, the glorious Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You who join us in your later and more experienced years have advantages and disadvantages. The passing of years seem to make us all less biddable both to those set over us in the Lord and to the daily teaching of experience. Was it not Bernard Shaw who said it was not experience which mattered but capacity for experience—the teachable mind, what our Master might have called the child-like mind. Our ministry is deceptive to the outsider. Some think it the softest job in the world, and so it can be made and sometimes is. Any fool can read a service, say a few words, and call at a house and pass the time of day. To make your services week by week a meeting place with God for all your people is a task which will call for all the spiritual and technical gifts which you possess or can acquire; for faith and hope and love, for knowledge of God and of men, for firmness, self-effacement, and tact, for eloquence and elocution, for a vision of the heavenly places and a remembrance of the temperature of the building. To preach the word of God Sunday by Sunday, to have in yourselves a real and fresh knowledge of theology, which is the study of God and His ways with us, to be able to express deep thought and feeling in simple moving words, to teach all sorts of people at the same time, so that some

may grow in the faith and others may discover it — this task which we are called to attempt is beyond our powers, and every sermon a failure. To enter into the lives of your people, young and old, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, Churchman and non-Churchman, Christian and atheist, to say the right word and to know what to leave unsaid, to warn sometimes, to encourage often, to sympathise and listen most of all; to be a friend of all and yet to be a man of God, to be godly and to avoid that meretricious piety, more Pharisaic than Christian, which haunts the way of the godly and called out the anger of Christ, to administer the organisations of your Church on an utterly voluntary basis — in short to be a minister of God, and of the Church of England, this is your calling and you will not count yourselves to have apprehended.

The clergy are always criticized. You will always be wrong, too worldly or too other-worldly, too clever or too stupid, too friendly or too aloof, too easygoing or too strict, too old-fashioned or too modern, too concerned with this or too neglectful of that. You will not be resentful of all this nor yet quite indifferent to it, for the criticisms of blunt and even angry men may reflect the judgment of God. Ours is a public life. You may, as I do, sometimes wear lay clothes, but you will never be off parade before God or man, and your people will judge you and your Gospel by your life and not by your words in church.

It is, in particular, often said of the clergy to-day that they speak a language no man understands, and that their sympathies are too limited. Will you be able to help us here?

You should be able to speak the language of the people. You have not had enough academic training in theology to be lost in that wood; only beware of any clichés you have picked up in your superficial studies. Keep close to the Bible, close to common-sense, close to your own honest experience of life and of God, and closest of all to the teaching of the Master and the needs of your people. Tell them of the God you really trust and serve.

Again, you should have a special power of sympathy, for you have lived in the lay world and know at first hand something of its special temptations and difficulties. You should

know what may help your people in sermon and service when they come once a week to church. You have the point of view of the pew. Do not forget it. And you have surely a special witness to give, for you can tell others in quiet words how God has led you to give your remaining years to the ministry of the Church.

My brethren, there is a deeper note to be struck on this day of ordination. To each of you it means the beginning of another stage on your earthly pilgrimage. You have long been Christian men, but this is a day of renewed dedication. To-day more fully than ever before you can 'present yourselves, your souls and bodies to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto God.' You will not count yourselves to have apprehended: none of us is greater than St. Paul; but like the great apostle you too will press on unto the goal. You will make the offering of your lives in the faith that God has called you, and calling you will enable you for the tasks before you. 'You have not chosen me,' said the Master, 'but I have chosen you.' That is a solemn thought. And you will need His strength. I have not pictured the life of a minister as an easy one. Why should I deceive you? These are not easy days for our Church or for our nation, or even for mankind. Yet please God, they shall prove the birth pangs of a new Church, a new nation, and a new civilization. You are going to have a special opportunity to serve in the labours of this rebirth. You are going to have a special opportunity to witness to those religious truths on which all civilization rests. You are going to have a special opportunity of helping men, now here, now there, to a fuller knowledge of God. There is no higher work, than that to which God has called you and the Bishop ordains you. And in this ministry we may all of us say, 'I count not myself to have apprehended, but I press on unto the goal of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

HOW A MODERNIST MAY WORSHIP

By the REV. H. J. TRUEMAN.

‘Be it our ritual to read
In Life our Faith, in Truth our Creed;
Let Fear its graven tablets break
And Love our Ten Commandments make.
Let us, when Heaven no light imparts,
Our Gospel seek in human hearts;
Our hymns of praise on children’s lips,
In Beauty our Apocalypse.
And let the burden all must bear
In silence, be our common prayer;
Let every flower that cleaves the sod
Become to us a Word of God,
And lifting Heavenward Life’s intent,
Love be, itself, our Sacrament.’¹

THE poet offers us here what the theologian would describe as ‘coming to religion by way of life,’² and such an approach may well make appeal to those English folk who, we are assured, ‘are not sacramental in their religion,’³ though, robbed of religion, their life would indeed be empty.

To many, it is true, the very centre of their worship is attendance at the Holy Eucharist, but to many, also, who still recognize the soul’s hunger for worship, Whitehead’s pronouncement holds good that

‘a half-civilized humanity has halted at the stage of satisfactory ritual and of satisfied belief without impulse towards higher things,’⁴

and they need what Canon Barry has called ‘a courageously new approach to the meaning of worship.’⁵ In the daily walk of life, in the beauty of Nature and in the gardens of the mind, we are called, says Radhakrishnan, ‘to train our consciousness to the level when it can see God,’⁶ and seeing, may adore. This

¹ S. R. Lysaght. ² Fosdick: *Adventurous Religion*, p. 28.

³ See *The Modern Churchman*, January, 1941, p. 392.

⁴ *Religion in the Making*, p. 28.

⁵ *The Relevance of Christianity*, p. 313.

⁶ *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 202.

would mean that though we may not be sacramental in our religion, we can be truly religious through our sacramentalism—our response to the call of the invisible through things that are seen and felt—able, ‘on the level of every day’s most quiet need,’ with the poet Francis Thompson, to ‘clutch’ ‘the inapprehensible.’⁷

An inspired commentator on the Fourth Gospel tells us,

‘The birds sing with happiness in their nerves and the flowers blush with the joy of colour: and then the infinite Goodness appears, and He is God, the Collected Goodness of the scattered Goodnesses. In the endeavour to give expression to our thankfulness for the good of being Worship is born,’⁸

and without such an attitude of worship in the soul, no formal ‘observance’ of Holy Communion can have the fulness of a sacrament. It is a devout Romanist who has said,

‘To some there is revealed a Sacrament greater than that of the Real Presence, a sacrament of the Manifest Presence, which is, and is more than, the sum of all the Sacraments.’⁹

Here is a sacramentalism that need be foreign to no sensitive Englishman, whether Modernist or not, if he can see in Nature and in History the perpetuation of the Incarnation, though it points to something very different from the formality which Whitehead deprecates. And here, again, in a profound work by Benchara Branford is high encouragement for those who may not be sacramental in their religion, yet would be starved without the heavenly bread of worship:

‘Spiritual faith in an infinitely Perfect Being grows, by its own irresistible attraction, into a gradual moulding of the believer’s whole life in harmony with an all-embracing Ideal wherein love and truth and beauty melt together into a *habit of worship* that is manifested in all that is felt and thought and done.’¹⁰

A significant article by the artist Harold Speed has recently urged that what politics are in need of is to be governed, not chiefly by reason and logic, but rather by feeling and love. It is the artist in government who can alone create the beautiful world, and ‘Beauty,’ he says, ‘is the love relationship where all

⁷ *The Kingdom of God.*

⁸ Peyton, *Memorabilia of Jesus*, p. 493.

⁹ Quoted from Coventry Patmore in Everard Meynell’s *Life of Francis Thompson*.

¹⁰ *Eros and Psyche*, p. 8.

the parts give of themselves for the unity of the whole.’¹¹ Could there be a better description of the sort of reasoned religion that finds its expression and even blossoms in worship—worship which, as Canon Barry reminds us, ‘is the recognition of worth,’ so that only by being worthy can we hope to grasp and be grasped by such a living religion, to make ‘a habit of worship,’ and not only appreciate love and truth and beauty, but also make the reciprocal offering of our own God-inspired natures? For the artist’s guidance is reinforced by the theologian’s. It is Canon Barry who regrets that so much of our public worship ‘lacks colour and spontaneity’; and he says,

‘If our services fail to awaken a sense of God’s nearness and reality it is because they are too little related with the concrete value of every-day experience to fill the worshippers’ thought of Him with content. Our worship . . . does not spring vitally out of the sap of life as at once its blossom and its consecration. We are worshippers without an offering; we bring nothing to lay on the altar.’¹²

But that need not be true of those who come to religion by way of life and, with the poet, read in life their ritual. The modern man may be estranged from ‘the sacrament of the altar’ by intellectual difficulties, but the heart has its reasons also, and the wise man knows that to train our consciousness to the level of being able ‘to see God,’ to recognize ‘the manifest Presence,’ is never a more facile way of worship than being ‘a regular communicant.’ He may be able to realize, with Radhakrishnan, that ‘it is the supreme light in us’ that gives us genius, heroism, or love—that fire of spirit of which none of us is quite destitute—and that if we ‘put the fire of Spirit on any altar, it blazes up to heaven’¹³ (the very symbol of the loftiest worship!); and this means that the Presence can break out on us anywhere, any-when. It may be, all unlooked for, in the delight of a longed-for letter, in the bitterness of a repented sin, in the eyes of a faithful dog, in the sense of loneliness and failure, in the gaiety of childhood, in the moving melody of a song, in the drudgery of daily bread-winning for dear ones at home, in the appeal of a primrose bank or the memory-haunted scent of the lilacs, in the sudden lightning-flash of an overlooked beauty or truth met

¹¹ *The Hibbert Journal*, April, 1941; p. 266.

¹² *The Relevance*, p. 313.

¹³ *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 206.

with on the printed page, in misrepresentation unresented and forgiven, indeed, in all the mystic wedding of grief and joy, the divinely appointed builders of Christ-like character; and so all life may be revealed throbbing with the incarnate spirit of Love and Beauty and Reality.

Does even this seem too 'sacramental'? We need not find it so if we can respond to the Presence in such homely words as those of the hymn-writer of another day:

'Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God,
In every part with praise,
That my whole being may proclaim
Thy being and Thy ways.

Not for the lip of praise alone,
Nor e'en the praising heart,
I ask, but for a life made up
Of praise in every part.

Not in the temple crowd alone,
Where holy voices chime,
But in the silent paths of earth,
The quiet rooms of time.

So shall no part of day or night
From sacredness be free:
But all my life in every step
Be fellowship with Thee.' ¹⁴

Here is nothing transcendental; but there *is* the truly poetic simplicity of a heart-stirring, childlike attitude of response and a very real 'communion.' And perhaps the test of our genuine effort to learn 'the habit of worship' may be our ability to join in the varied songs of Lysaght, the poet of simple love, who would lift earth to heaven; of Bonar, the poet of the heart's adoring, who would put heaven into every day; and even of the inspired mystic, Francis Thompson, for whom heaven and earth are so inseparably one that his verse assures us 'All the springs are flashlights of one Spring!' ¹⁵

¹⁴ Horatio Bonar.

¹⁵ From *The Night of Forebeing*.

DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH IN
THE SECOND CENTURY¹

IT is hardly an exaggeration to speak of the second century as the Age of Apologetic, as the fourth was that of the Great Creeds. The Apologists are men who, faced with the determined opposition of the Roman state, desired to justify Christianity at the bar of Heathendom. More than this: they took in hand to rebut the charges commonly made against Christians, who were accused of gross immoralities, and hated because of their supposed subversive tendencies in the religious and secular spheres. Their meetings, necessarily held in secret, were regarded with grave suspicion not only by the imperial authorities, but by the people at large. Orders were issued proclaiming the illegality of all such gatherings. Yet the harassed worshippers must have continued to meet, both for worship and discussion, under cover of darkness or in the privacy of friendly houses. Not the least curious of the charges brought against the New Religion was one that accused Christians of infanticide cannibalism and incest, in connexion with their celebration of the Agape and Eucharist²; doubtless rumours had got about that human flesh was eaten and blood drunk, thanks to unguarded remarks by Christians making use of words, familiar enough to us, attributed to Jesus himself (*John* vi, 52-6). These sayings would be taken quite literally by Pagan listeners, and the false conclusion was almost inevitable. It was high time, then, for duly qualified teachers to offer a sane and reasoned defence both of the lives and doctrines of Christian believers. Philosophers, like Justin; thoughtful writers, like Athenagoras and Aristides; men of the world, like Minucius; unknown apologists like the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus*; an eminent lawyer, like Tertullian: all such men desired to publish the facts about this '*religio illicita*,'

¹ The substance of a paper read before the Winchester Clerical Society, May 1941.

² Cf. Lightfoot, *Ignatius*, Vol. i, pp. 52, 400; Tertull. *Apol.* 7; Eusebius, *H. E.*, V, § 14; Min. Felix, viii, 4; Routh, *Rel. Sacr.*, i, 300, 336.

as it was dubbed, a religion which, at the end of the first century, was beginning to disturb the easy acquiescences of the pagan world. That world was contemptuous, but already a little uncomfortable, as Pliny's letter to Trajan clearly indicates.

We may begin our brief survey with the Apology of Justin Martyr, who speaks of himself as writing about one hundred and fifty years after Christ. To him, almost more than to any other Apologist, the Christian revelation came as an answer to his own earnest search after truth, by the way of philosophy, for he was a man of culture and a student of Plato — for whom the Church has always had a tenderness, as it has had, too, for the poet Virgil. But, before dealing with Justin's work, something perhaps should be said about the conditions of the Pagan world in the second century, both from an ethical and religious point of view. A significant change had, almost imperceptibly, been coming over the world since the days of Nero and Domitian. A feeling of disillusionment was beginning to stir in men's minds. The old established religious system had lost its appeal, at any rate to the earnest and the thoughtful; the discontent was widespread. Later on it was to touch the hearts even of common folk; but not yet. Serious thinkers were fully aware that the conventional worship of State deities could offer nothing to those desirous of some surer confidence. Yet those ancestral cults were so intimately bound up with an age-long tradition, whether secular or sacred, that there was a real reluctance to interfere with them. Officially, they must be carried on, for fear of too seriously damaging confidence in popular beliefs, which were naturally stronger in country districts than in centres of urban population. One of the factors making for this changed outlook was the growth of emperor-worship, and this because, amid quasi-Oriental movements in the religious domain, men in the whole Mediterranean areas believed that they might find a new rallying-point of loyalty as well as of cult. Something had taken place since the close of the Julian and Flavian dynasties to undermine the older loyalties. The introduction of Eastern deities, like the Magna Mater, Isis, and Serapis, was widespread. Mankind was touched with a new awareness; some better hope was stirring to assuage the increasing heart hunger. The imposing theologies of the Orient were slowly making their

contribution; nor was Stoicism without its influence.³ Matthew Arnold, in well-known lines, vividly brings before us what was happening in the Graeco-Roman world :

‘ Unduped of fancy, henceforth man
Must labour, must resign
His all too human creeds, and scan
Simply the way divine.
Some new-born hope must dawn at last,
Or man must toss in pain.’

There was, in fact, a failure of nerve⁴ everywhere, and, with it, a half conscious conviction that a re-orientation of the spirit was needed — was indeed at hand. Nor can we forget the slow but sure penetration into society of that other creed, with its new promise and its unfaltering conviction — a creed despised and rejected at the moment, but making its way, little by little, in the moral life of the community. Paul had marked it, in vision, at an early date, when, standing on Mars’ Hill, in the very metropolis of human wisdom, he proclaimed the regeneration of the world.

So, as the power of a new life of the Spirit gathered momentum, despite all set-backs, fallings away, and blank misgivings, there dawned in the hearts of Christian thinkers the imperative desire to dissipate false views of the Faith, and to present to their fellow-citizens a defence of doctrines that to the Jews were a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness. The age of the Apologists had begun.

Justin was born in Palestine; the date of his birth is not known, but it must have been early in the second century. From early years he was devoted to philosophic speculation, and even after his conversion he still wore the philosopher’s cloak. That he lived for some time in Rome, we know from his own statement; and it was there he suffered martyrdom during the reign of the Stoic Emperor, Marcus Aurelius. His writings were numerous, but of these the most important is his first Apology. A complete system of doctrine it neither is nor was meant to be: Justin’s purpose was a simple one — to persuade opponents to grant a fair hearing to the ‘*nova superstitio*,’ as men called it,

³ But, in the end, Stoicism failed, because it is, fundamentally, ‘a philosophy of despair’ (Bigg, *Christian Platonists*).

⁴ See Chap. IV in Prof. Gilbert Murray’s *Five Stages*.

and to insist that Christians should be given an honest trial before being condemned. Now the persecutions that occurred in Rome and in the provinces during — and after — the second century were different, not in intensity but in character, from those of an earlier time. *Then* Christians — hardly differentiated in the popular imagination from Jews — were executed as criminals, ridiculous as were the charges levelled against them; *now* they were to be condemned ‘for the Name.’ If when the presiding judge, after he had put the question ‘Are you a Christian?’ was answered in the affirmative, that was enough for the accused to be led out to death, without further examination. The inherent cruelty of such a method, which was a travesty of justice, emboldened Justin to speak his mind. He did not think it of prime importance to exculpate his fellow-Christians from absurd charges so much as to explain the creed as something in its nature reasonable, and to justify it at the bar both of philosophy and commonsense. As a philosopher, his ambition was to reconcile Christian thought with what was best in Greek philosophy: hence his references to such men as Socrates and Plato. Clear-cut dogma is not to be found in his writings: the epoch of theological definition was still two hundred years ahead. Yet there are obvious indications of what he held to be doctrinal truth. His Platonic training had convinced him that no true conception of Deity could possibly be linked with polytheism, however much pagan moralists might endeavour to sublimate it: Justin was a monotheist before he became a Christian. No reader of the *Apology* can fail to note the stress laid on God’s uniqueness and transcendence. Less easy is it to formulate Justin’s attitude to Jesus, in His character as a second divine person; but he did identify Christ as the true Logos of God, and that in a twofold sense, as (1) the Agent in Creation, (2) the summation of divine truth. Although he believed in an incarnate Logos, he did not follow the implications of that belief to its logical end. Of any systematic treatment of the Atonement, there is no trace in his work; with theories of ‘Satisfaction,’ such as later writers formulated, he had no acquaintance.

One of the most interesting chapters in Justin’s first *Apology* relates to the ceremonial adopted in the Eucharistic service.⁵

⁵ Chap. 67: cf. Pliny, *Ep.* x, 96; *Didache*, 9. 10.

Simple that ceremonial was, but (as Lightfoot observes) it sufficed before the building age began. During the first century and a half of its existence Christians had no churches; even in the latter part of the second century they were rare and (for obvious reasons) quite unobtrusive. Here is the sum of what Justin tells us of a typical Eucharist:

‘We all meet together on Sunday (τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένη ἡμέρᾳ), first to read the Memoirs of the Apostles⁶ and the writings of the Prophets. Then the President (ὁ προεστώς) gives an address, followed by prayers. This done, bread, water and wine are brought in; the President again rises to offer thanksgiving, the people joining in a response. Next, the Elements, over which a special thanksgiving is made, are distributed; portions are sent to absent members of the community by the hands of deacons (διὰ τῶν διακόνων). Follows now a collection for the sick and needy.’

Such, in brief, is Justin’s account of a gathering in, let us say, the year 150; and, by way of challenge to heathen objectors, he adds these words:

‘If these proceedings are void of offence, respect them; if not, dismiss them as mere folly; but do not condemn to death, as enemies of the community, those who are innocent of any crime.’

In speaking of the Holy Spirit, Justin’s utterance is uncertain; we are left to conjecture whether he regarded Him as person or attribute. What is noteworthy in the Apology is the importance attached to the presence of demonic agency in the world. This would not seem strange to contemporaries; Plutarch⁷ had already formulated a more or less elaborate demonology. Justin’s eschatology is not developed, but the trend is obvious: human beings would finally rise with their natural bodies, then would come the Judgement, the good to inherit immortality, the wicked to suffer the penalty of fire (literally). Justin’s ethics, though unsystematic, are plain and practical; doubtless he was anxious to win the approval of the more thoughtful and less prejudiced of his pagan readers. He does not, like Tertullian, draw lurid pictures of the immoralities of the heathen world, contenting himself rather with indicating what the Christian life was and ought to be, and exhibiting the facts to the community at large. His aim being to persuade rather than to bludgeon

⁶ Apparently the first hint in Christian literature of a liturgical reading of the Gospels.

⁷ See his *de defectu orac.* 13.

people into acquiescence, he would appeal to them as a philosopher, not as a fiery rhetorician. Of his use of the Bible, it is perhaps enough to remark that his quotations from the Old Testament (which are numerous, mainly from *Isaiah*) are generally accurate, whereas those from the New Testament vary a good deal from our present text; probably he relied too much on his memory. It appears that he was acquainted with most of the books of the New Testament, but his chief authority is *Matthew*. His chiliastic tendency is marked; nor need this surprise us. 'Chiliasm,' says Lightfoot, 'is the rule, not the exception, in Christian writers of the second century.' As for style, he lacks charm or eloquence and is frequently clumsy; but sensible he generally is, and his language varies little from the ordinary speech of his day. We might not unjustly describe Justin as a practitioner in the sphere of sanctified commonsense.

Before passing on to the *Apology* of Aristides, a few sentences may be devoted to that attractive little dialogue, the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix. This work (the first *Apology* in Latin) was written, according to some critics, in the second century, but many authorities date it after the *Apologeticus* of Tertullian; if so, it belongs to the third century. In this dialogue we are brought into the heart of Roman religion at work in everyday life. A theological treatise it is not, but a straightforward statement of some of the main tenets of Christianity, chiefly in its moral aspects. The pagan interlocutor in the dialogue is supposed to be expounding a lost oration of Fronto, tutor to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. This interlocutor, Caecilius by name, attacks Christianity (about which he knew almost nothing, save by hearsay) with great vigour, displaying no little intolerance and prejudice; but, in the end, he is honest enough to admit that the arguments put forward on the Christian side have finally convinced him, and he embraces Christianity forthwith. The opening scene of the *Octavius* (where we are introduced to the *dramatis personae*, namely, three friends strolling along the beach at Ostia) is genuinely charming, and reminds one of the famous introduction to the *Phaedrus* of Plato. Not only is this little treatise well worth reading for the thoughts it contains, but also for its excellent Latinity; we have nothing so 'Ciceronian' again till we come to Lactantius. It has been well said that the

reader who wishes to see the different ways in which Christianity can be presented should peruse first Tertullian's *Apologeticus*, and then the *Octavius* : it is an interesting study in contrasts.

Perhaps it may be well to enquire briefly into the causes that led to the diffusion of the Gospel in the second century. This process was more rapid than has sometimes been supposed ; nor were converts always recruited, as Celsus—its bitter critic—tried to make out, from the lowest classes. Even in Pauls' day, the Apostle, on reaching Italy, was met with a goodly number of sympathizers ; and we read in the *Acts* that Christian missionaries were hailed as men who had turned the world upside down. Some fifty years later, as we learn from Pliny's letter to Trajan (112 A.D.), the movement had greatly increased ; while, within less than a hundred years from Pliny's time, we find Tertullian exclaiming :

‘ We are but of yesterday, but we have filled your cities, islands, towns, villages, centres of assembly, even your camps, your forum, nay, the imperial palace itself : we have left you only your temples.’

An exaggeration, perhaps ; but statements not wholly dissimilar were made by others. What then were the chief causes for such a rapid dissemination of Christianity in so hostile an environment ? Professor Bury gives four : (1) the all-embracing character of the religion, opening its doors to slave and sinner alike ; (2) the promise it held out of a future life ; (3) examples of noble martyrdom ; and (4) the attraction it had for women, who at length felt themselves placed on a spiritual equality with men.

We may now pass on to Aristides the Apologist,⁸ who wrote his defence shortly before or after Justin. A Syriac version of this work was discovered fifty years ago by Rendel Harris ; and while it was being printed another discovery was made, this time by Armitage Robinson, who came across the Greek original, which differs somewhat from the Syriac. Till the appearance of the volume which contained the two texts our knowledge of Aristides was very scant, though Eusebius mentions this Apology along with that of Quadratus (the latter, however, being no longer extant).⁹ The Apology of Aristides—who, like Justin.

⁸ Not to be confused with Aristides, the rhetorician : for the latter see Livingstone, *Mission of Greece*, chap. xi.

⁹ Cf. Euseb. H. E., iv 3, where he speaks of Q.'s ‘ apostolic soundness in the faith.’

was a philosopher—was presented, or intended for presentation, to the Emperor Hadrian, a tolerant man with ‘a dissatisfied truth-seeking mind,’ from whom the Athenian may have hoped for much, probably during the imperial visit to Athens in A.D. 126. How the Emperor received the work, if indeed he did so, we know not; he may be imagined to have laughed, not unkindly, at the author as a man with a crotchet, apt to impose on the credulity of others. But, as any unprejudiced person might have seen, there is nothing of the charlatan about Aristides. His ethics show a certain continuity with the moral code of Judaism; consequently there is nothing in his pages to match the severity, even contempt, with which the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus* attacks the Jewish system of worship. It is worth remarking that we find in this Apology traces of a creed not dissimilar to the Apostolic Symbol, though with certain points of difference. There is, we must allow, a good deal of sameness in some of the second century Apologists; but we should be unwise to neglect Aristides, who was Justin’s predecessor in time of composition. Though first addressed to Hadrian, it was apparently held back from actual publication till years later, when it was delivered to Hadrian’s successor, Antoninus Pius. Aristides deals trenchantly with pagan cults, and contrasts pagan practices with Christian, going so far as to affirm that the whole world ‘stands’ by reason of Christian intercessions; otherwise it would perish; for the heathen, groping in the dark, are unwilling to learn the truth, but like drunken men stagger and fall, whereas Christians stand upright. One striking feature of this work is the emphasis laid on the brotherhood of mankind, on the duty of universal charity, and on domestic purity—this last a matter of slight moment to pagans, whether philosophers or not. In conclusion, Aristides utters a solemn warning—the certainty of judgement to come, which Jesus the Messiah will infallibly execute on the whole human race.¹⁰

It seems curious and illogical to us that Christians should ever have been stigmatized as *atheists* as well as haters of the human race. The real reason for the charge of atheism was that Christians had no visible representation of Deity, nor shrines

¹⁰ Cf. Tertullian, *Apol.* 48; *de test. animae* 4. Perhaps based on such passages as *Hebr.* x, 27; *Jude* 15.

nor temples such as were so familiar to pagans, who could not conceive of a religion lacking these accompaniments. It is possible that the term *ἀθεότης* signified 'sacrilege' rather than 'atheism'; and we may remember how the rabble yelled the cry, 'Away with the atheists,' while the aged Polycarp awaited in the arena his fiery ordeal.¹¹

We turn now, very briefly, to what Westcott termed one of the gems of early Christian literature, something that Lightfoot twice referred to as 'that noble utterance'—the anonymous *Epistle to Diognetus*. Who wrote it? We do not know. When was it written? This is a matter of controversy; Harnack thinks it was a third century product; Lightfoot thinks it belongs to the second century: few will hesitate to follow the considered opinion of that great scholar and historian. Admirable as this epistle is both in thought and expression (except for its attack on the Jews), there is no reference to it in later patristic: this may account for its being set down by one critic as a fourteenth century forgery! Enough to say that the writer was a man of some standing and of considerable culture, in whose letter we have (to use Westcott's words) 'the natural outpouring of a Greek heart holding converse with a Greek mind in the language of the old philosophers.' As for Diognetus himself, he must have held an important position in the Government, because he is addressed as *κράτιστε*, 'Your Excellency,' the word used by Luke in the preface to his Gospel, when dedicating it to Theophilus. The epistle, as it has come down to us, consists of twelve chapters, but the two final chapters are the work not of the author of 1—10, but of another: they are out of keeping with the rest of the treatise. Chapter 10 ends abruptly in the middle of a sentence: how much has been lost it is impossible to conjecture.

It has been justly said that of all the writings in the period of our survey only two merit the word 'charming'; one is the *Octavius*, the other the *Epistle to Diognetus*. It is a true piece of apologetic, but written in a friendly spirit to a friendly and enquiring pagan. The object of the writer being to win consent

¹¹ Once only in the N.T. does the word *ἄθεος* occur: *Eph.* ii, 12. The pagan reproach 'no altars,' referred to by Minucius X, was urged by Celsus (*Origen contr. C.*, viii, § 17).

from, and not to antagonize, such an enquirer, the writer exhibits great tact in avoiding dogmatics. There is no developed Christology, for one thing; nothing is said of the Holy Spirit; Trinitarianism is left untouched. Great emphasis is laid on the *love* of God—a wise decision, for it was sure to arrest the attention of pagan readers alike by the beauty and unfamiliarity of such a concept. The following sentences give a good idea of the manner of the writer and of his attractive style.

‘What the soul is to the body, this Christians are to the world. The soul is dispersed through all the body’s members; even so Christians are dispersed through all nations and countries. The soul dwells *in* the body, but is not *of* the body; Christians likewise dwell *in* the world, but are not *of* it. So the world hates us because, though suffering no wrong at our hands, we teach the need of renouncing worldly pleasure that wars against the soul. The soul cherishes the body and its members, which, in return, hate the soul; similarly the Christian loves those that hate him. And the more we suffer persecution for our faith, the more we increase; and this is not the work of man. No: it is the power of the Living God, and the token of His presence.’¹²

Unable, through lack of space, even to glance at the writings of other apologists, like Athenagoras, I come finally to the greatest of all ‘Defenders of the Faith,’ the redoubtable Tertullian. We all know his many serious faults; but we might well recollect Johnson’s remark on Goldsmith, ‘Let not his frailties be remembered: he was a great man.’ Born about the year 160, in Carthage, where his father was a centurion, he migrated to Rome, there to study law and rhetoric. At the age of thirty-six, or thereabout, he returned to his home, soon to become prominent for his energetic advocacy of the faith he had recently embraced. With the mind of an Old Bailey lawyer, he was a somewhat unscrupulous pleader; but there was no one to challenge his pre-eminence. If his philosophy was incomplete and poor, and his style amazingly difficult, yet his skill in seizing the salient points in his own case, and displaying in the worst light the weakness of his opponent’s, rendered him a formidable critic. Gibbon has endeavoured to minimize the extent and severity of the persecutions, but we may feel sure that Tertullian held a better brief than the historian. Apart from Nero and Domitian, the emperors were not the worst offenders, as Tertullian admits. It was largely the local officials and an ignorant

¹² I hope to deal fully with the *Epistle to Diognetus* in a forthcoming article in *Theology*.

and prejudiced populace that were foremost in making life intolerable for believers. The legal position of Christians, unlike that of the Jews, was always precarious. Their aloofness, their refusal to pay homage to the Imperial cult, their threats of eternal punishment for unbelievers, the strictness of their lives—all these things made them hateful. The stories of midnight abominations at their conventicles, and the secrecy of their worship, greatly told against them. The fanaticism of their enemies was fanned to fury by yet another reason. Never had the Empire been visited with such dire calamities as took place in the second century : wars, epidemics, famine—all were ascribed to the New Religion which, undermining old beliefs, was fast bringing about an apostasy from the established worship. The gods of the pagan Pantheon were angry ; they must be appeased ; victims were required, and these were to be found among the followers of the Galilean teacher. Cognisant of this, Tertullian resolved to offer a complete refutation of the charges made, and a vindication of the Christian position. The *Apologeticus* was the result. It is a superb piece of fiery eloquence, stern invective, burning conviction and devastating irony. The prime object is stated in the opening chapter : *ne religio Christiana ignorata damnetur*. It was no part of Tertullian's plan to present his heathen readers with a system of Christian evidences ; he conceived himself as one standing up in a court of law, briefed to defend those who had been wantonly and unjustly charged with offences of which they were wholly innocent. When we ourselves are tempted to make unworthy compromises in religion, we might well learn a needed lesson from Tertullian's refusal to make terms with injustice ; might well learn something from his inflexible zeal for right. We may, if we choose, condemn his intolerance, but intolerance has its place in the economy of God. As Froude said long ago, people can generally afford to be tolerant when they don't care.

Tertullian, as I have remarked, is a difficult writer ; a really adequate rendering of his works is perhaps impossible. The forcefulness of his style seems to evaporate in translation. But he is worth reading, even in the inadequate versions we possess. He is rarely dull. Whether right or wrong, his thought cannot be mistaken : he meant what he said, and he said what he

meant; and he knew—none better—how to smite his enemies in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual shame. In conclusion, I give the closing words of his masterpiece, if only to indicate, however feebly, of what African Latinity was capable when the heart of the writer was touched with fire from off the altar.

‘ Victory is the winning of what one has fought for ; and *our* victory carries with it both the glory of pleasing God and the spoils of eternal life. “ But,” you will argue, “ we are convicted ” : true, but only after we have won the battle. Therefore, with us, death is victory. Of course, those we conquer hate us ; it is for this reason we are deemed desperate men. To despise death and every sort of torture, on behalf of friend or country, is permitted by you ; yes—but not if it is endured for the sake of God ! But go your way, your Excellencies, all the more popular in the eyes of the mob if you sacrifice Christians to their fury ; your injustice is the sign-manual of our innocence. This is why God suffers us to undergo these things. Though each act of cruelty is more refined than its predecessor, it avails you nought : rather is it a lure to our sect. The more you mow us down, the more we spring up : the blood of Christians is seed.¹³ That very obstinacy you execrate is a lesson to the world. For who, by contemplation of it, is not staggered, and moved to enquire what it means ? Who, when he has enquired, does not join us ? Who, when he has joined us, does not long to suffer, that so he may win the fullness of God’s favour, the fullness of forgiveness from Him at the price of his own blood ? Hence, when condemned, we give thanks for your sentence. As there is enmity between the things of God and the things of man, we know that, when we are condemned by you, we are acquitted by God.’

E. H. BLAKENEY.

BOOK REVIEWS

CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE*

It has been a familiar theme for many years now with preachers and teachers of Scripture to explain that the Christian religion is not just ‘ a special way of being good and kind,’ as a boy once called it, not simply ‘ uplift,’ but is a legitimate system of beliefs based on the historical facts of the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. A young and unconvinced listener might well ask the question, ‘ Well, if that is so, where can I get hold of a full and fair statement of what Christianity really is, in essence, in history, and in its implications for my life to-day ? Where can I find that, stated simply and readably, and in terms which do not conflict too obviously with modern assumptions about the nature of man and the nature of the universe ? ’ I know no book which could give a more adequate answer to

¹³ Cf. Blunt, *Right use of the Fathers*, pp. 239-41.

* *Christian Belief and Practice*, by Canon R. D. Richardson. (James Clarke & Co. 7/6. pp. xiii+231. 1941.)

that question than the present volume. It is intended primarily for teachers and lecturers, but it could be read with almost equal profit by one who was looking for a book in which he could study the claims of Christianity for himself. It is not intended to be an 'original' book which makes a new synthesis or puts a new point of view: it is more of a compendium, but a well-written compendium, and bearing the mark of the author's personality broad upon it. A conspectus of the table of contents will explain the book's purpose more shortly than any words of mine. There are three Preparatory Sections on the Course and the Teacher, on Prayer and Meditation (a very valuable chapter), and on Confirmation. These are followed by nine Lessons on the Christian Faith: two on Foundations, six on Belief in God as revealed in Nature, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Duty, Free Will and Immortality, concluded by a chapter of Summary. Then come thirteen sections on the Christian Church and the Christian Life, which include such subjects as Church Ceremonial, the Book of Common Prayer and the Services of the Church, Good Manners (an excellent and most helpful chapter), three sections on the Growth of the Bible, one on the Inspiration and Transformation of the Church, and a last chapter, which might have been longer, on Problems of Social and Personal Life. The book ends with three additional sections, one of questions on the course, and two more on Arrangements for a Confirmation and Rules for Attendance at Communion. It will be seen that the ground is well covered. The value of each chapter is greatly increased by a list of books on the special subject of the chapter. I think that these short bibliographies would have been even more valuable if the relevance of the various books to the topics of the chapter had been indicated more closely. For instance, the book-lists appended to two chapters chosen at random (that on Free Will and that on Immortality and the Life of Prayer) include

Tennant's *Philosophical Theology* (two volumes),
 Oman's *Grace and Personality*,
 Rashdall's *Principles and Precepts*,
 Inge's *Philosophy of Plotinus*,
Immortality, by Pringle Pattison,
Eternal Life, by Baron von Hügel,

an imposing list, though the last-named book should be marked 'for advanced students'; but it would need a clergyman of considerable leisure and scholarship to make a discriminating use of these great books. If a little more were said of them, and some indication given of the parts which were relevant to the various questions raised, it would help to remedy a defect which is inevitable in a book of this size on such a vast theme, namely the very small space that can be allowed for discussion of deep matters, e.g. a page and a half for the Freedom of the Will, half a page for the Problem of Evil. This is not meant as a criticism of the book; proportion demands

such limits. But the author would avoid giving an impression of a certain glibness in these sections if a note were appended, saying 'But for a fuller discussion see so-and-so, such-and-such chapters.' As it is, one is afraid that the bibliographies are too wide and general to be profitably used by a teacher without much spare time.

The tone throughout is Modernist. Some of the more mysterious clauses in the historic creeds are silently ignored, and a modern form of Creed suggested. The author's standpoint is clear from such sentences as these:

'The teacher should remember that our knowledge of 'spirit-appearances' is very limited, and that we must be prepared at any time to re-interpret the Resurrection stories in the light of further evidence.'

'The real "apostolic succession" is the continuance of apostolic discipleship.'

[With regard to revision of the Communion Service] 'The language about eating the flesh and drinking the blood should be made less insistent and quite clearly symbolical, for it encourages materialistic and magical ideas in the minds of those to whom it is not repugnant.'

One is grateful for such candour, and the author is never out to criticise accepted beliefs for the mere fun of criticism. He has written a scholarly and a reverent book. As he wisely remarks in an introductory chapter, 'The trained theologian is far more radical than his critic. He is, in scholarship, a generation ahead of most sceptics and agnostics; critical of his Biblical sources; instructed in the evolution of the Church's beliefs and practices; one who embraces Christianity as a religion of the spirit.' Surely that needed saying. And the reverent spirit in which the whole book has been conceived can be best seen in the prayers which conclude each chapter.

J. T. CHRISTIE.

THE TESTAMENT OF BEAUTY*

The appearance of a third edition of Mr. Nowell Smith's Notes to *The Testament of Beauty* shows that the valuable aid which they provide towards the understanding of a difficult work is appreciated. The latest edition does not differ materially from the earlier ones, but has an appendix of three pages of additional notes (at the beginning of which 'p. xxv' should read 'p. xxxv'). Mr. Nowell Smith does not appear to have noticed that there is a misprint in the text of the poem itself (at any rate up to the 8th impression) at line 71 of Book IV, where the quotation from Aristotle should read *διὰ τινος θείας αἰτίας*, not *διὰ τίνος κ.τ.λ.*; and we are disappointed still to find no explanation of the phrase 'high-kilted gossips' (III, 887). The epithet has escaped even the Supplement of O.E.D., published some years after the poem. 'Gossips' presumably means 'cronies,' and the

* *Notes on the Testament of Beauty*, by Nowell Charles Smith. Third edition. (O.U.P. 1940. 5/- net.)

epithet suggests the short skirts of girls only slightly older than the 'children' mentioned.

The Testament of Beauty holds an unique place in the poetry of the period between the wars. On the one hand it is a long philosophical poem on a great theme (did not Bridges long refer to it as his *De Rerum natura*?), in an age when other poets preferred to write lyrics on small subjects; on the other hand it is a poem of rare hopefulness, differing herein from its classical predecessor, in an age of prevailing pessimism in literature. In both these respects it is akin to Victorian rather than to Georgian poetry; and yet no one could call Bridges a Victorian. Mr. Nowell Smith claims that *The Testament* is 'the first great didactic poem of aesthetic philosophy.' The poem is indeed didactic, but it does not fail, like most didactic work, to be also constantly imaginative. Through all the range of learning and argument may be felt the creative imagination of a poet drawing out what he felt of beauty in the rich opportunities of a long life. All through, in spite of some wilfulness and arbitrariness of language, as of spelling, there are countless examples of that 'curiosa felicitas' of diction which Bridges had earlier shown in many an exquisite lyric. Such are, to illustrate from the first Book only, the description of 'a winter rose-bed' as bursting into 'crowded holiday of scent and bloom'; of the process of hearing as 'jostling ripples' of air 'by the enthron'd mind received on the spiral stairway of her audience chamber'; of musicians like Bach and Mozart as 'minstrels who pioneer'd for us on the marches of heav'n'; of the home of the first philosophers as 'the blue Ionian shore Where in her Mediterranean mirror gazing Old Asia's dreamy face wrinkleth to a westward smile'; or, finally, of science which having

'outrun all magic

and disclosing the secrecy of the reticent air
hath woven a seamless web of invisible strands
spiriting the dumb inane with the quick matter of life.'

'Every lover of words must be a lover of Tennyson,' said Raleigh once, and the same is true of Bridges.

But the readers of this journal are looking for something more than felicity of language. They are hardly likely to share the fashionable view that the subject of a poem, or the truth of its thoughts, are a matter of secondary or negligible importance. Mr. Tillotson writing *On the Poetry of Pope* may be well advised to pour scorn on Victorian concern with the subject of a poem; and Mr. Basil Willey writing on *The Eighteenth Century Background* may feel it necessary to placate some of his readers by the plea that *The Prelude* has value as a revelation of what Wordsworth felt so strongly, apart from any objective validity to be attributed to his experience, or what he thought to be his experience. But there are others, whose voices have been less heard of late in academic circles, who will continue to believe with Hazlitt or Arnold or Bradley that poetry is one

approach to truth, and that, therefore, other things being equal, the greater the subject the greater the poem. That the poet is a seer is good Platonic doctrine, and Sir Herbert Grierson has lately reminded us of the kinship between poets like Milton and Wordsworth and the Hebrew prophets. A great poet is something more than an artist in words; he is one who sees more deeply into the heart of things than most of us, as well as one who has the power to convey his experience to us through 'words in tuneful order set.'

The theme of *The Testament* is very close to that which Wordsworth claimed as his special field, 'How exquisitely the external world is fitted to the mind.' It is not only an old man's last will, but also his final testimony to his belief that

'Man's happiness, his flaunting honey'd flower of soul,
is his loving response to the wealth of Nature';

and that 'This spiritual elation and response to Nature
is Man's generic mark.'

The poem is, indeed, a presentation of Christian Humanism, and not least with regard to sexual love, or, as Bridges terms it, Breed. A typical ascetic or Puritan view may be seen in a sentence of a mediaeval Sub-Prior of Ripon, 'Wheresover beauty appears in the face, there lurketh much filth beneath the skin.' Spenser voiced Renaissance humanism in his Hymns where he claims that all outward beauty is the index of a beautiful soul within. Bridges avoids the obvious difficulties of so naïve a view—e.g.

'Thus full oft the full majesty and happiness of love
is found in lovers whose corporeal presence
would seem disloyalty to the gay worshippers
of the goddess of grace, nor fit to approach her shrine'—

but a long section of the poem is devoted to the exaltation of Christian marriage as against the Essenes on the one hand and free love on the other. Bridges accepted the Platonic scale from physical to spiritual beauty:

'First in animal mating
the physical attractions, as they evolved with sense,
took-on beautiful forms, til beauty (as in bird-song)
was recognized consciently and exploited by art,
and after in man became that ladder of joy wheron
slowly climbing to heaven he shall find peace with God,
and beauty be wholly spiritualised in him,
as in its primal essence it must be conceived.'

—(III, 787-93).

Most members of the Modern Churchmen's Union are Christian Platonists at least to the extent of accepting Truth, Beauty and Goodness as absolute values, whose ultimate ground must therefore be God. They may look in Bridges for his witness to the Spirit of Whom his friend G. M. Hopkins wrote, 'The Holy Ghost over the bent world broods With warm breast and with ah! bright wings'—and they will not look in vain. They

will find a mind of extreme sensitiveness and austere taste who has been more deeply impressed by beauty, both of nature and art, than by anything else in the course of a long life. It is useless to ask for any new answer to the problem of evil. Bridges, like Keats, had walked the hospitals as a young man, and one of his best known shorter poems is 'On an infant dying as soon as born.' He admits that reason cannot answer the problem which she alone poses :

'. . . he himself
becoming a creator hath often a thought to ask
why Nature, being so inexhaustible of beauty,
should not be all beauteous ; why from infinit resource,
produce more ugliness than human artistry
with any spiritual intention can allow?'

but in one of the most difficult passages of the poem (III, 999 etc.) he argues that those

' who for love of truth refuse
to blink dishonestly the tribulation of man
but deem it final truth '

are like those who would prefer to grieve with both eyes in Hell rather than to enter with one eye into the kingdom of God.

' I think,' says Mr. Nowell Smith in his note on the passage, ' Bridges means to say that modern man must be content to forgo the satisfaction of his thirst for a complete and irrefragable explanation of the great problem of evil, of Nature's " inhumanity," etc. He must, in a sense, relinquish the most precious jewel of his manhood, his power of Reason, and humble himself to the simple faith of a little child—a faith however, which, as he has already said, is quite as much justified to Reason as are the doubts of Reason themselves, by the spiritual joy awakened by natural beauty.'

We have around us just now such appalling evidence of ugliness, at any rate of man's inhumanity to man, that there is all the greater need to remind ourselves of the other side. That is the constant theme of the poem from the flowers on the ' seaward South-downs ' at the beginning of *The Testament* (' each type a faultless essence of God's will ') to the conclusion that

' Verity by Beauty it is that we come at Wisdom,
yet not by Reason at Beauty.'

For the gift that Bridges bequeathed to the world is a poem that does more than most to vivify and enlarge our sense of beauty. What more can we ask of poetry—but what less?

' What is Beauty? saith my sufferings then.—I answer
the lover and poet in my loose alexandrines :
Beauty is the highest of all these occult influences,
the quality of appearances that thru' the sense
wakeneth spiritual emotion in the mind of man :
And Art, as it createth new forms of beauty,
awakeneth new ideas that advance the spirit
in the life of Reason to the wisdom of God.' —(II, 840-8.)

R. E. C. HOUGHTON.

A SCOFFER TURNED PROPHET*

'I am appalled when I reflect upon the time, care and attention spent by clergy of all denominations on thousands of sermons to which I listened in the first twenty years of my existence. . . . Yet at the end of twenty years I had no real belief in God. . . . Now, at the age of 32, I have begun to go to church again. For I have recovered, through contact with the Oxford Group, the living faith in God which I had at my mother's knee.' So writes Mr. Peter Howard in a recent article in the *Church of England Newspaper*. In his book, *Innocent Men*, he tells how this has come about. He puts down frankly and objectively all the factors of inheritance and upbringing and the circumstances which led to his change of mind and heart; and he goes on to show how on this foundation of personal change or Conversion there is being built up now a national and international movement for rebuilding the social and political structure on a Christian basis.

The Oxford Group's work for Moral Rearmament has lately been brought to the fore by Mr. A. P. Herbert's attack in the House of Commons. A section of the National Press has taken the opportunity to publish personal attacks on Dr. Frank Buchman and his closest followers, impugning their patriotism. On the other hand, the Provincial Press, more closely in touch with the actual work which is being done in some 250 boroughs throughout the country, has realised the valuable support that it has been giving to the Government's call for civilian morale. Numerous articles to this effect, and letters from civic authorities, have appeared in the local newspapers, in particular in such heavily bombed areas as Bristol, Swansea and Cardiff.

In face of these conflicting opinions many people are puzzled to know the truth, and they will welcome the appearance of this book, giving first-hand information, written by one who was known to millions as a hard-hitting political journalist. With a mind trained to scepticism, he set out to expose the men behind Moral Rearmament. But, as has happened before to one who began by 'breathing threatening and slaughter,' he found the scales fell from his eyes and he was forced to acknowledge that he had come upon a genuine movement of spiritual revival, with a programme to save a crumbling civilisation by re-creating the individuals who compose it. In the course of his apologia, Mr. Peter Howard gives the true facts about various points of controversy which have been raised by the antagonists of the Group, such as 'Is he pro-German?' and 'What is the truth about their money?'

In Battersea, where the reviewer works, a campaign for Moral Rearmament has been going on for two years, with centres in two parishes but overflowing into two or three others. Teams of workers have come week after week visiting over 10,000 homes, having personal talks with the

* *Innocent Men*, by Peter Howard. (Heinemann. 2/6. 1941.)

people and distributing literature. They have taken a message of Christian Victory and Hope to thousands who are beyond the reach of the parochial clergy and have shown them that a vital and practical Christianity can meet the needs of working men and women in the twentieth century. There is much disillusionment in the minds of people, and doubts and fears about the future; many ask if Britain has the intention and capacity to put forward any solid and lasting solution against Hitler's New Order. Here is the book to dispel their fears. As a R.A.F. sergeant wrote:

'I am grateful to Mr. Howard for showing me the solution to this world's unhappiness. I am fighting this war without belief in the peace to follow, but he has shown me that even I can work for real peace and happiness. Please let me know what I may do and how to approach it.'

E. GRAHAM HOBHOUSE.

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH THEOLOGY THROUGH AMERICAN EYES*

Dr. Horton's survey, though not intended for British readers, is bound to have a certain interest for them. It describes much with which we are already familiar, but it is useful as showing how our theology looks to an English-speaking American, and since it deals with a situation prior to the outbreak of the present conflict, it is valuable as indicating how far religious thought in the United States was then already turning from Germany to Great Britain. In religious, as in political affairs, says the author, English moderation, with all its 'muddling,' is a better guide to-day than German extremism. There is matter for reflection here.

Dr. Horton begins by outlining the three persistent traditions in British theology, Catholic, Protestant, and Liberal. He then considers the swing of the pendulum between 1907 and 1935, and the theological conferences held between what perhaps must now be called the first and second German wars. Then working backwards he proceeds to describe four different types of liberal theologian, grouping them under the headings of Unitarian, Platonist, Scientific Empiricist, and Futurist. Turning to Catholic and Protestant, he takes as examples of the first the contributors to *Essays Catholic and Critical*, and of the second, the late Dr. Oman. Here of course the date of the book is manifested. Had it dealt with a period later than 1935, it would have been more appropriate to discuss as examples of Protestantism Principal Whale, Dr. Farmer, Dr. Newton Flew, and Dr. Micklem. Two of these indeed are mentioned, but their standpoint and contributions, now so prominently before us, were then matters of the unprobed future. In any case, it is a trifle doubtful whether Oman is really a good example of the Protestant. As a champion of private judgment, yes certainly. But Dr. Mozley, lately reviewing *Honest Religion*, points out what a very lonely and independent thinker Oman was, and

* *Contemporary English Theology*, an American Interpretation, by Walter Marshall Horton, Oberlin College, U.S.A. (Student Movement Press, London. Cr. 8vo, 186 pp.)

how widely he departed from even Reformed Christian tradition. (It is significant that his disciple and successor, Dr. Farmer, shows a tendency to revert to that tradition.) Oman in fact is almost more of a liberal than anything else, and perhaps his early interest in Schleiermacher is no small evidence of this.

Finally Dr. Horton emphasizes what he calls the 'Central' trend of contemporary English theology, and describes Archbishop Temple, jun., as its typical exponent. Special emphasis is laid on the divergence of the latter from the Barthian school in his treatment of natural religion and general revelation. Probably it will be felt that not quite enough space has been given to Professor A. E. Taylor, whom some will prefer to Temple as an example of a Christian philosopher.

These lectures (delivered on four successive occasions), though not intended to be profound, but rather expository, must be regarded as a useful piece of bridge-building between theologians on opposite sides of the Atlantic, and for this we certainly owe the author much gratitude. The reviewer is touched to find himself, on pages 106, 170, and 177, invested with a title which he has never enjoyed.

A. C. BOUQUET.

THE BLIGHT OF ORTHODOXY *

The progress of science has been so phenomenal that everyone imagined it would continue indefinitely. Yet all things depend on the conditions which produce them; in the case of scientific progress one of such conditions was freedom of thought, and this is now endangered. It is natural that in the sphere of science the suppression of liberty should be inspired, as is the case in the sphere of religion, by the most laudable motives. It is desired that science should be made useful in the service of humanity, should be 'adjusted to its social function,' and so on. The doctrinaires who are at the back of all totalitarian scheming demand that scientific research should be subordinated to some general plan devised by a central authority. In their view what has hitherto been known as pure science, the disinterested search for truth, is a form of snobbery, a relic of bourgeois, liberal superstition. The most notable exposition of this point of view is Professor Bernal's able and powerful book, *The Social Function of Science*, while the satellite works of Professor Hogben assist in the propaganda. As against all this Professor Polanyi's book is a fine plea for liberty in science. In his view science is 'an organism of ideas,' the growth of which 'cannot be deflected from its internal necessities by the prospects of useful applications.' Attempts to direct research towards results of possible practical applicability cannot lead to a growth of science which is of much value.

'A consistent policy conducted on these lines would actually stop the development of science altogether, turning in effect the efforts now

* *The Contempt of Freedom*, by Professor M. Polanyi. (Watts & Co. 5/-, 1941.)

devoted to scientific research into attempts to discover empirical solutions for practical problems.'

The policy of endowing research for practical aims, if universally adopted, would only bankrupt Peter to pay Paul; nor would Paul (applied science) derive the profits now derived from Peter (pure science). Science, showering material gifts on mankind when allowed to follow its own spiritual aims freely, would soon lapse into barren torpor if restricted to serve the needs of society. The truth is that 'society must cultivate thought and not seek to dominate it.'

It may be said that this battle of the scientists has no interest for theologians; but that is not so certain. Put research and scholarship in the place of pure science, and 'apologetics' in the place of applied science, and the dispute becomes relevant. If our student's primary motive for study is to discover facts and arguments that can serve to patch up the ancient fabric of orthodoxy, it is not possible that scholarship or research will prove fruitful or creative. Of course, Professor Polanyi does not apply the parallel, for our business is none of his. But we can apply it for ourselves. To adapt the Professor's own remark, 'the church must cultivate thought and not seek to dominate it.'

J.C.H.

THE GOSPEL IN TIME OF STRESS*

Mr. Williams in his little book, *The Strife Goes On*, seeks to inquire into the development of the idea of spiritual conflict, and to trace its origin and progress within the stream of Hebrew and Christian thought. He follows the conception through prophets, psalmists, the Son of Man, the Apostles, the Fathers, the poets (by no means only Christian or Jewish), and finally studies it in the nations collectively considered. He demonstrates how it has varied from a purely spiritual metaphor to the crude enlistment of God as an ally on our own side in the earthliest and most selfish of contests. His final applications to the strife of to-day are eminently balanced and discriminating.

Mr. Chirgwin, in *Under Fire*, has given us a detailed study—delightfully readable and fascinating, in spite of its very 'factly' nature—of the present-day strife, in every part of the world, of the Gospel as such against its many adversaries. It is curious to observe for what different reasons it is attacked—now, for instance, for its sturdy opposition to Emperor-worship and chauvinistic nationalism, now for its alleged 'imperialist' sympathies. Its accidental entanglements with such factors as Indian nationalism rallying, on patriotic and political grounds, to the Hindu revival, or again the colour-bar in Africa, are illuminatingly and sympathetically handled. The final chapter on 'The World Church' is particularly inspiring. 'A somewhat unlooked-for consequence of the spread of Christianity is the demonstration of the universal suitability of the Christian Church'—not merely of the Gospel as such.

* *The Strife Goes On*, by R. R. Williams, R.T.S. (Lutterworth Press. 1941. 3/- net.)
Under Fire, by A. M. Chirgwin. (S.C.M. Press. 1941. 5/- net.)

Personal Religion and the Future of Europe, by Douglas Stewart. (S.C.M. Press. 1941. 2/6 net.)

This budget is suitably rounded off by Mr. Stewart's ringing challenge to the condemners of Christianity. He devotes himself principally to making intellectual mincemeat of the average 'decent' man who never prays, and thinks he can get along quite well without God, 'so long as he lives a good life.' He concludes trenchantly, 'M. Georges Bernauss [has said] "Christianity has been the making of Europe. Christianity is dead. Therefore Europe must die too." Unless——'

N. E. EGERTON SWANN.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

'LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.'

SIR,

Probably no prayer in the whole world is uttered so often as the *Pater Noster*. With what divers intent! It is more than a series of petitions in which we express our desires to God. Rather is it an expression by the Human Family of sincere desire to co-operate with 'our Father' in the fulfilment of His Will and purpose. If we consider the Lord's Prayer in that aspect certain clauses which present some difficulty fall into place. The first half of the prayer needs no comment, 'Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy Will be done.' We know that to offer these prayers would be meaningless and ineffectual unless there is 'sincere desire' to offer our wills to co-operate in the 'hallowing,' the 'coming,' and the 'doing.' Also when we pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' we are acknowledging our entire dependence as a race on the Giver of life, and the obligations by work of some sort to co-operate in producing the daily bread we ask for, or by justifying our use of it by some service, bread being the symbol of all things needful for the life of mankind. Then we come to clauses which offer some difficulty. 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive.' A good man once said to me he would like to alter that sentence so that it might run, 'Forgive us our trespasses and teach us to forgive those that trespass against us.' I replied, 'No, the condition must stand.' That condition is inexorable; it embodies a law of the Universe. If we do not forgive sincerely we cannot be in communion with God; our prayer of dedication to co-operate with God is stultified. God Himself cannot change that law which is an expression of His own Nature — His own justice. Quite recently I was forced to consider this matter more closely by a sermon which told us that as Christians we must pray, not only for our enemies in general, which is not difficult, but for Hitler in particular. I had to examine myself and ask how I could sincerely pray for Hitler. Without 'sincere desire' there could be no forgiveness and no reality in prayer for him. I found the answer in an ancient prayer in the *Apocrypha* that I have often used. 'O Lord, Father, and Governor of my whole life . . . set scourges over my thoughts, and the discipline of wisdom over my heart . . . spare me not for my ignorance . . . pass not by my sins.' *Ecclesiasticus* xxiii, v. 1, 2.

If we can truly say that for ourselves, we can also say it honestly for Hitler. We can desire that God may deal with him as we also desire to be dealt with, and that the *scourges* over his thoughts may, eventually, awaken him to the hell he has already made for himself, and that, through that terrible discovery, he may, in another life, if not in this, turn to the God of Truth to 'deliver him from Evil.' In that noble Psalm, the 139th, the

writer, after declaring his hatred for the enemies of Righteousness, turns his thoughts inwards and implores God to search his own soul and drive the same enemy from him if He sees the 'Evil thing' lurking there. It is thus that we can pray for forgiveness — not desiring to be spared the consequences of wrong doing, but rather welcoming the suffering which wrong doing brings, a suffering in which all members of all nations must bear their part, often vicariously, for we are members one of another, and the Captain of our salvation calls us to share his burden as the *Sin* bearer. If the final clause of the Lord's Prayer is understood as the expression of the will to co-operate with God in the great warfare against evil, the difficulty experienced by some persons in this petition, 'lead us not into temptation,' disappears. It is an act of surrender by which all human ambitions are laid on God's altar, sacrificed to the supreme aim of obtaining Deliverance for Mankind, and for each individual from Evil. Ambition is not intrinsically wrong. It is not wrong to desire gifts of mind or body, or to desire scope for the use of these gifts. But we recognise that often the fulfilment of these legitimate ambitions leads men and women into positions in which their characters and ideals deteriorate. Anyone who honestly uses this prayer, thereby renounces all fulfilments of ambitions that might weaken the moral tissue of the soul. We surrender all legitimate ambitions if they interfere with spiritual emancipation. It is the co-operation of the human will with the Divine which gives significance and power to this petition.

'How know I, if Thou should'st me raise,
That I should then raise Thee?
Perhaps great places and Thy praise
Do not so well agree.' *George Herbert.*

HELEN A. DALLAS.

SECULAR AND SPIRITUAL.

SIR,

I hope Mr. Kingdon will not take it amiss if I venture to criticise a remark which he made in the course of his important and striking University Sermon published in your June issue. Mr. Kingdon is now, deservedly, one of the leading personalities in the M.C.U., and therefore anything that he says on such an occasion will be read with careful attention by his fellow-members of the Union. In a reference to the rejection of the revised Prayer Book by the House of Commons Mr. Kingdon interpolated the remark: 'however much we may deplore the way in which secular authority seemed to override spiritual.' If these words indicate that Mr. Kingdon thinks that the action of the House of Commons on this occasion was an infringement of the spiritual independence of the Church he has, I submit, adopted a view which differs from that of most Modern Churchmen and which, in the light of events in Europe and the present religious situation, lacks vision. Let us examine the matter a little more closely. The Church of England is subject to the Royal Supremacy. That supremacy is now exercised constitutionally as a Governmental and Parliamentary supremacy. It is, in substance and effect, a lay supremacy for which many of us thank God. It is indisputable that the rejection of the Prayer Book Measure by the House of Commons was a legitimate exercise of its legislative powers in relation to the Church. The reasons for the rejection are well known. But though Mr. Kingdon will probably admit that the House of Commons acted within its legitimate powers, he apparently regards the vote as an

act of 'secular' authority imposing its will upon spiritual authority. Even on this view it cannot be said that the vote was inspired by hostility to the Church of England. Nor, in our own day, is the Royal Supremacy exercised generally otherwise than with goodwill to that Church. Contrast this with the attitude of the State to the Church in Nazi Germany and what a profound difference we see. But I have suggested that the view which Mr. Kingdon seems to hold lacks vision and for this reason: the future of Christianity in England is not, I would suggest, so sure or clear as some of our complacent ecclesiastics may think. Mr. Kingdon himself, in his sermon, warns us that 'the present war has given us what may prove to be a last chance to bring about the resurrection and re-integration of Christianity in Europe' If this be true we cannot afford to forego any single factor in the structure of our political and social life which makes for the preservation of the Christian *ethos*. On this view the establishment of the Church of England, subject to the Royal Supremacy, may now be seen to have a new and vital significance. So long as it lasts it will mean that the English Government and Parliament are constitutionally committed to active concern, both in administration and legislation, with the welfare of the Christian Faith in England. Is it not then desirable to hold fast to the principle of co-operation between Church and State which is clearly to be found in the working of the Royal Supremacy? The Church then should not seek to weaken State control, but rather to encourage State interest in the Church and, acting as the spiritual Remembrancer of the State, to move forward with it into the new political, social and economic order which is coming. But if the Church is to keep step with the State it must put its own house in order, not merely in administrative and financial matters, but in those things which, as you, Sir, have pointed out, are much more fundamental, *viz.* in the spheres of Christian Education and Christian Unity. And in this joint progress to a new and better order in State and Church the latter will, I suggest, have to take a view of Government and Parliament which no longer regards them as 'secular' institutions but as instruments through which the Divine Spirit may work to the end 'that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavours upon the best and surest foundations that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us for all generations.

H. F. WALKER.

Arnside, Westmorland.
June 28th, 1941.

CHRISTIANITY AND SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,

According to your reviewer of Canon Anson's book in the June *Modern Churchman*, the Canon states that the poor quality of the messages from the supposed spirits may be due to difficulties of communication. It is said (as often before) that between the 'spirit' and the human inquirer are the 'control' of the 'medium.'

If this is really so, let 'controls' give whatever messages they like to 'mediums'; let a sufficient number of these messages be given without alteration to the world and we should soon be in a position to judge what truth (if any) there is in the claims of Spiritualism.

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